

THIN BLACK LINE



THE ORDER OF
SAINT CECIL

UNKNOWN
ARMIES

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THE ORDER OF SAINT CECIL

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A SUPPLEMENT FOR
**UNKNOWN
ARMIES**

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ATLAS
GAMES

PART 1: THE LIGHT OF TRUTH BLINDS

THE LEGEND OF ST. CECIL

*The Moor looked at me with his sorcerous eyes.
“You belong to my servants” said the Moor,
and unleashed his demonic spirits upon me.*

*I was drowned under the assault. Spirits clawed
their way into my body and my mind—but
not my soul. It was days, it was weeks, it was
months of unchristian behavior. It was wrong.*

*Still, a part of me fought against
his unnatural dominance.*

*Finally, through strong prayer, reflection upon
the struggles of the saints, and the Love of
Christ—I came free of his foul domination.*

—*The Testimony of Saint Cecil*

In Al-Andalus in the Emirate of Grenada, in the Year of Our Lord 1236, a Christian priest—Cecil—was magickally assaulted by a Moorish sorcerer named Al-Sulayman. That priest’s ultimate victory against dark powers led to the establishment of the Order of Saint Cecil. That’s the legend, at least. Its events are recorded in a work called *The Testimony of Saint Cecil*. But the fact of the matter is that there’s no record of a Saint Cecil—not on the books, at least. There’s a Saint Cecilia and a Saint Cecilius, but no Saint Cecil.

RTFM

REFERENCES

This supplement contains lots of references to existing *Unknown Armies* material. For easy reading, most are abbreviated.

- † AOTM: *Ascension of the Magdalene*
- † BT: *Break Today*
- † HH: *Hush Hush*
- † LGM: *Lawyers, Guns, and Money*
- † PMM: *Postmodern Magick*
- † TG: *To Go*
- † UA2: *Unknown Armies Second Edition*

GOOGLE ME

Where you see the names of people, places, and events in typesetting that looks like this, go forth and google them for more info. They’re all primo NPC and adventure seed fodder.

Some say that the story of “St. Cecil and the Moor” is allegorical, and that the Order knows it. These scholars argue that the Order’s name comes from the Latin phrase *sanctus caecus*, which means “holy blindness.” Cecilites voluntarily blind themselves to magick, and



keep the world blind, too, by destroying it where they find it. If thine eye offend thee, pluck it out.

Other occultists explain the events of the *Testimony* as a combination of hypnotism and demon summoning.

THE FOUNDING OF THE ORDER

Dating back to the days of **Simon Magus** (Acts 8:9–24), the Church has always had members who have confronted adepts. Over the centuries, they’ve done a lot of confronting.

Pope Urban V formally founded the Order of Saint Cecil in 1369. He was mostly worried that if enough European kings became aware that Moorish/Saracen magick actually worked, they’d resist further crusades.

Here’s a quick and sketchy list of the important dates that shaped the Order in the first few centuries of their existence. Many involve the acquisition of magickal libraries or artifacts.

† 1236: The events of *The Testimony of Saint Cecil*.

† 1244: Montségur—the stronghold of the Cathars—falls.

† October 13, 1307: The arrests, torture, false confessions, and burning at the stake of many Templars, including Jacques de Molay.

† 1312: The **Knights Templar** are formally disbanded by Pope Clement V. (Pope Clement absolved the Templars of all heresies in 1308, but the **Chinon Parchment** containing the details was misfiled, only coming to light in 2001.)

† 1350: Sir John Mandeville tangles with the Brotherhood of Harmonious Repose in Hangzhou, and his memories and dreams get scrambled. These events are described in the second half *The Travels of Sir John Mandeville*.

† August 19, 1369: The secret, formal founding of the Order of Saint Cecil by Pope Urban V.

† 1440: The trial and execution of the bloody, bold, and resolute **Gilles de Rais**.

† 1539: The Order fights against Mayan magick.

† 1541: The execution of **Hubert Roscommon** in Salzburg (*UA2*, p. 229).

† 1557: The sly, conspiratorial, and mystical **Guillaume Postel** joins the Jesuits.

† 1600: **Giordano Bruno** is burned at the stake.

† 1610: The events of *The Ascension of the Magdalene*.



OLD SCHOOL OCCULTISM

The magick of antiquity and the medieval period—alchemy, proto-Cryptomancy, Kabbalism, Western necromancy, goetia, and so on—worked much differently than modernist magic did and postmodern magick does today. (More info at “Magick” in *UA2*, p. 83, and “Why Now?” in *PMM*, pp. 15–20.)

This Old School Occultism worked back in the day because those adepts were drawing power from the collective unconscious of humanity. But as superstition fell to reason—as God and the Devil gave way to a scientific and secular view of the universe—that unconscious lost its faith in magick. As a consequence, magick became harder to do. It got more complicated, and became less reproducible.

Mostly, Old School Occultists dealt with artifacts (*UA2*, p. 223), demons (*UA2*, p. 220), rituals (*UA2*, p. 96), and spells. “Spells,” here, means alchemy, charms, curses, glamours, hexes, talisman creation, and all that jazz.

Here’s a quick-and-dirty set of mechanical guidelines for how Old School Occultism was different from today’s adept schools:

- † Practitioners of Old School Occultism always had minor charges on hand. They gained one per day starting from the end of the new moon. (When the moon went dark again, all accumulated charges were lost.)
- † Gaining significant charges required at least six hours of uninterrupted study or meditation, or

the use of a ritual like Harmonious Alignment (*UA2*, p. 98).

- † Gaining major charges required at least a month of uninterrupted study or meditation, or the use of a ritual called Virgil’s Vigil, which has been lost in the modern day.
- † Old School traditions had no real formula spells, but their adepts could flexibly duplicate the effects of the proxy (*UA2*, p. 101) and tilt (*UA2*, p. 105) rituals, as well as any of the unnatural phenomena described at *UA2*, pp. 298–300, with one minor charge per minor effect, five minor charges per significant effect, and one significant charge per major effect.
- † “Fixing” a magickal effect into an item (i.e., creating an artifact) added a cost of five minor charges.

As a quick-and-dirty guide to how an Old School Occultist operating today would be different from an adept of a postmodern school (if, say, someone wants to play an Old School adept), all of the above remain true, except:

- † Old School Occultists in postmodern times gain one minor charge per *week* (as above, re-starting from the end of the new moon).

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- † Gaining a significant charge today requires at least a *day* of uninterrupted study or meditation, or the use of a ritual like Harmonious Alignment (UA2, p. 98).
- † Gaining a major charge now requires at least *six months* of uninterrupted study or meditation.
- † All Magick: Old School Tradition rolls are made at a -50% shift.

In short, it's no small thing to cling to the idea that science, rationality, and the very foundations of modern society are fundamentally wrong, but that's what contemporary Old School Occultists have to do. And the universe punishes them for it.

Old School Occultists might also want to look at the Magus avatar (*AotM*, p. 52) and Authentic Thaumaturgy (*UA2*, p. 101).

LA BELLE FRANCE

The first quarter of the 17th century was the height of witchcraft and demonic possession in France. Aghast, in the 1650s—the time of the Sun King Louis XIV—the Order of Saint Cecil decided to take advantage of all of the mystical knowledge, captured artifacts, and native talents it had acquired over the preceding two and a

half centuries to take up the tools of magick against magick.

It ended badly. *Very* badly. So badly that the Order will never again try to fight fire with fire.

AIX-EN-PROVENCE AND LOUDUN

In 1609, demons began possessing nuns in Aix-en-Provence. Exorcisms were futile. All evidence pointed to **Father Louis Gaufridi**, because it turned out that he'd had a lot of sex with the nuns. Eventually, he was called out as a devil worshipper, sorcerer, and general bad egg. Tortured by the Inquisition, he made a huge confession and was executed.

Aix-en-Provence set a precedent: it was the first time a possessed person's testimony was accepted in court. Demons first mentioned at Aix-en-Provence (and recorded in the *Phonebook*—see below) include **Verrine**, the demon of impatience, and **Sonneillon**, the demon of hate.

In 1634, the Ursuline nuns of Loudon were possessed by a plague of demons—possibly the largest case of mass possession in history. A good-looking man (wealthy and well-educated to boot), **Father Urbain Grandier** cut a sexual swath through the nuns. He had incurred the wrath of **Cardinal Richelieu** by writing a libelous satire about him in 1618, and also in resisting the destruction of the fortifications of Loudon (that is, by opposing Richelieu's program to eliminate Huguenot strongholds by destroying local fortifications). Grandier was eventually convicted of the crimes of sorcery, casting evil spells, and enabling the possessions visited upon the Ursuline nuns—based on the testimony of possessed nuns, of course.

The Jesuit **Father Jean-Joseph Surin** was sent to Loudon to exorcize the nuns. Struck by their torment, he offered to be possessed himself instead of them. The



demons swarmed into him. For twenty years, Surin served as a living demon-prison. Many times, he was paralyzed or forced to commit uncontrollable sins with his body.

Two of the demons mentioned Loudon (and recorded in the *Phonebook*), among a portfolio of many more, include *Isacarron*, the devil of debauchery, and *Gressil*, the demon of impurity and uncleanness, the latter of whom essentially turned state's evidence as part of the affair.

It was in the wake of these mass possessions, and armed with the knowledge they had accumulated in centuries of fighting the occult—a warehouse of artifacts, a great deal of New World mystic info, and the “information” (that is, the *lies*) provided by the demon *Gressil*—the French chapter house of the Order started using magick to fight magick, around 1653.

They thought they could wield magick without being changed by it. They were guilty of the sin of pride. The infection soon spread from France to Spain and Portugal. Western Europe started getting really weird: ghosts everywhere, lots of people getting possessed, adepts running rampant doing either fancy magick (nobles) or folksy magick (peasants). This “occult renaissance” set the stage for what came to be known as the Affair of the Poisons.

THE AFFAIR OF THE POISONS

Dateline: 1675 to 1677, France.

At all levels of society, people were going to fortunetellers for drugs, for poisons, for prophecies, and for curses. Then, important nobles started dying. In essence, everybody was poisoning—or using magick against—everybody else.

The volume of cases clogged the French judicial system, and the Order was in the thick of it, using magick

in their warfare, espionage, diplomacy, and politics.

The witch/midwife *La Voisin* implicated numerous nobles, even including the king's mistress, the *Marquise de Montespan*. Most of the implicated nobles and clergymen were high-ranking members of the court or the Church. A few were even members of the Order of Saint Cecil!

On February 22, 1680, *La Voisin* was burned at the stake for witchcraft and poisoning. One-hundred and fifty-six “magicians” died at the same time.

After the Affair of the Poisons, the pope placed the Order under the guardianship of the Society of Jesus, the Jesuits.

FATHER “RENÉ ENCANTO”

Father “*René Encanto*” was a Gascon, an abbé, a disciple of Father Surin, an intriguer, a noble, a musketeer, a spy, the Superior General of the Jesuits, a grandee of Spain, an ambassador, and a fighter of monsters. Born *Henri d'Aramitz*, fictionalized as “*Aramis*” in Dumas's work, he changed names like you change your underwear. Some sources claim he died in 1674, but he actually lived (under the radar) until 1719, finally dying at the ripe old age of 99.

After the Affair of the Poisons, and the sweeping of the Order of Saint Cecil under the Jesuit rug in 1680, *Encanto* was made Order's head, its Superior General. He's remembered today as the reformer who re-aligned the Order's operations into their contemporary organization.



THE AGE OF MODERNIST MAGICK

From around 1700 to 1910, the Order was mostly doing exorcisms, taking down “sorcerers” (read: adepts and avatars), meddling in politics, overtly using magick powers, and beating up on vampires and zombies.

They noticed that the ground was shifting beneath their feet, as the types of magick they were used to fighting (mostly diabolic or heretical in nature) were slowly being replaced by less religious and more philosophical types of magick. These were the so-called “modernist” schools like the Way of Cogs (Mechanomancy), the Way of Text (Bibliomancy), the Path of Indelible Liberty (“freedom”), and so on. Where Old School Occultism represented an antique or medieval worldview, these modernist Ways and Paths reflected a more secular, individual, and rational outlook. There was, in the world, a loss of ambient magick power that was accompanied by a commensurate rise in *personal* power.

Here’s a short list of the notable events the Order participated in during this era:

- † 1789: The formal ratification of the Constitution of the United States of America, completely shocking at the time.
- † 1885–1917: Father Bérenger Saunière shakes the Church down for cash, using it to rebuild his local church (Rennes-le-Chateau, in France). In truth, Saunière had discovered a relic with mystical powers and sacred provenance, a supernatural nuke that became the heart of a political struggle between the pope and the Superior General of the Order.

† 1890-1897: Joséphin Péladan, Gerard Encausse (“Papus”), and the “War of the Roses”—Rosicrucian factional warfare.

† 1904: Aleister Crowley has a vision in Cairo. The result: *The Book of the Law*.

† 1937: The rift between Jacques Bergier and Fulcanelli.

The one-two punch of the World Wars caught the Order unawares, knocking them off their feet, which culminated with the loss of the Knocking Box (see below).

THE AGE OF POSTMODERN MAGICK

After the World Wars, the Order tried desperately to regain their footing. They were often stymied by the rise (resurgence?) of the Sleepers and the explosion of new schools of magick including Plutomancy, Cliomancy, Entropomancy, and others.

The mid-50s through the mid-70s saw both groups fighting each other, and often: James Bonds in collars versus James Bonds with wands. Plus, now, the magickans were doing their stuff differently: they had different powers, knew different demons, and were working on different ideas! The occult world had changed around the Order once again, and they haven’t even caught up to the last Age yet.

A few highlights of the postmodern age:

† 1946: John Whiteside Parsons, American rocket scientist and occultist, attempts the “Babalon Working”



(with L. Ron Hubbard, no less!), intended to incarnate a living goddess. It failed.

- † 1953: The Order kidnaps (and later accidentally kills) French alchemist and author Fulcanelli.
- † 1960s–1990s: Magickal turf wars (very bad in San Francisco), riots from the Sleeping Tiger being woken, and the rise of cults—often archetype-related—like those of Jim Jones, Charles Manson, and Dermott Arkane.
- † 1997: Anton LaVey, the founder of the Church of Satan, dies and is cremated, his ashes divvied up between his heirs. The Order steals LaVey’s cremains and replaces them with Folgers crystals.
- † 2000: Mak Attax pulls off their “Safe and Happy New Year” project.
- † 2006: A massive zombie outbreak in Sydney, Australia is contained by the Order.

Despite all their research, the modern Order *still* can’t really understand the modern Occult Underground. Trying to fit the Underground into the Order’s religious schema just doesn’t work. For example, the Order doesn’t distinguish between “adepts” and “avatars.” They class both under the basic header, “Magick is a Sin.” Their medieval viewpoint fundamentally limits what they can understand.

Bottom line: The Order is old, rigid, and strange. The Occult Underground is new, flexible, and accepting.

MAGICK VS. SORCERY VS. WITCHCRAFT VS. MIRACLES

The Order slices very thinly when determining the provenance of supernatural powers.

Magick is the use of hidden forces (ordinarily reserved to God).

Sorcery is the use of spirits/demons to effect changes in the world.

Witchcraft is making a pact with the Devil for power.

Miracles are wonders that serve as signs of a special mission or gift, explicitly ascribed to God. A miracle...

- † Must be useful; worthy of holiness, goodness, and the justice of God; and conducive to the true good of men.
- † Must not produce disorder or discord.
- † Must contain no element that is wicked, ridiculous, useless, or unmeaning.

The Order currently believes that 99.44% of all supernatural events are magick, sorcery, or witchcraft—and thus, intrinsically evil. To them, there is no such thing as “good” or “white” magick.



PART 2: THE PURE OF HEART

Members of the Order of Saint Cecil are taught to recognize, analyze, and eliminate supernatural threats. They focus on discerning the difference between the mundane, the mystical, and the magickal. The mundane must be protected, the mystical must be studied (to determine if it is godly or satanic), and the magickal must be destroyed.

Being a Cecilite priest is very different from being a parish priest. They have no home. They jet around the world to perform exorcisms. Sometimes, they shoot people in the face.

Fight the crazy. Destroy the demonic. Corral the weird.

THE CECILITE IDEALS

The Cecilite ideal essentially encompasses a simple pair of directives:

- † Protect Humanity
- † Know Yourself

PROTECT HUMANITY

The Order exists to determine if a supernatural event is godly or satanic—and then to destroy the latter. However, a wider interpretation of this ideal lends itself to three additional spheres: medicine, mental health, and physical security. It's no coincidence that many—perhaps even most—Cecilites are trained as doctors, psychologists or psychiatrists, or soldiers.

KNOW YOURSELF

A Cecilite must understand himself to best fulfill his duties. He must consider his actions and desires, his blind spots or established attitudes, and how those affect his mission. A Cecilite needs to see where God is challenging him to change and grow, and where he is calling him to reflection or action.

BEING A CECILITE

ORGANIZATION & HIERARCHY

The Order is currently composed of 139 full members (priests), 67 associate members (monks and nuns), 5 of the “Gifted” (see “Part 3: The Gifts of the Spirit,” below), and at least 230 lay support people.

The Order of Saint Cecil is led by a Superior General who nominally reports to the Superior General of the Jesuits. The Cecilite Superior General is elected, popularly, by the entire “Order Formal” (i.e., by its priest members), is confirmed by the Pope afterwards, and then rules the Order for life. The current Superior General is Father Cheng Huang, an avuncular scholastic.

The Superior General is aided personally by three Advocates, known as “Humanity,” “Knowledge,” and “Occultism.”

The Order divides the globe into various geographic provinces, three per continent. Each of these provinces is led by a Father Provincial, who is selected by the Superior General and directly responsible to him.



A Cecilite lives the three solemn vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience—plus a **fourth vow** (usually unique to Jesuits) of obedience to the pope.

Lastly: no ordained member has *ever* betrayed the Order (though lay associates have, repeatedly, about once a century). Both TNI and the Sleepers have compromised most of the Order’s electronic information resources and networks, but only a few of their physical ones.

RECRUITMENT

The Order recruits new members as best it can, from three main categories:

- † Clergy (priests, monks, and nuns), or the faithful who have witnessed supernatural events.
- † The Gifted: Charismatics or those with “wild talents.”
- † Deprogrammed adepts (see “Mentored Adepts,” UA2, p 113). By driving an adept insane, the Order can change the target’s obsession skill, effectively cutting him off from using magick. (However, it’s unusual for ex-sorcerer members to be treated with full trust.)

EDUCATION

Members of the Order of Saint Cecil are among the best-educated people alive. In addition to ongoing theological studies, every Order priest and lay member has or is instructed to gain significant knowledge in at least one other academic field. See “The Cecilite Skill,” below.

BLESSINGS OF THE ORDER

There are benefits to being part of a large, rich, legitimate monster-hunting organization.

TRAVEL ANYWHERE: The Order has a small fleet of vehicles—planes, helicopters, cars, jeeps, boats—as well as trained pilots, drivers, and mechanics. When on a mission, Cecilites have access to this fleet and its support personnel.

REQUISITION EQUIPMENT: The Order can provide any sort of off-the-shelf hardware (handcuffs, firearms, ammunition, computers, cellphones, etc.) and even some military-grade equipment, provided the Cecilite has appropriate training.

COMMAND SUPPORT: Each Order field team has a support team back at the closest HQ, wired into the OSC datanet and available 24/7 while on a mission. From googling up info from the web (or the Order’s

THE ALL-CECILITE PC GROUP

A PC group composed entirely of priests, associate members, Gifted, and specially skilled lay members can work really well in a street-level *Unknown Armies* campaign, will have interesting challenges in a global-level campaign, and would probably be an exercise in frustration in a cosmic-level campaign. Be warned.

Such a group would be a mash-up between the “Occult Investigators” and “Vigilantes” group structures (UA2, pp. 28–9). Call them demon-centric reality cops.



archives), getting an attorney down to the precinct house, or wire-transferring sick amounts of money, they can get it done.

TRAVAILS OF THE ORDER

There are also problems to being part of a large, rich, legitimate monster-hunting organization.

GROUND ZERO: Order members are always being found at the sites of creepy stuff. The local and federal authorities agents in many countries do not like this, and tend to suspect Cecilites of all sorts of things.

FOLLOW THE MONEY: Order operations are easily trackable from financial records, travel itineraries, and the strange and expensive purchases made by the Order's front companies.

POROUS PERIMETER: The Order's relatively large size means that for an ostensibly secret organization, it's fairly easy to insert moles into their hierarchy, or to other garner intelligence about them.

CECILITE LOCATIONS

The Order maintains three chapter houses on each inhabited continent (sorry, Antarctica!). These are chapels, dormitories, data centers, supply caches, secure locations, safe houses, and administrative headquarters for the Fathers Provincial. All members of the Order—clergy, brothers and sisters, and laity—have access to them. They are comfortable, but not luxurious.

Lay staff maintain the chapter houses and work directly for the Fathers Provincial. Most Cecilites are assigned a “home” chapter house.

Additionally, all Jesuits offer aid and shelter to Cecilites when they require it, the Jesuits just don't have

access to the same sort of resources.

LA TOUR NOIR

“The Black Tower” in Lyons, France is the main headquarters of the Order, the mother house, which the Superior General calls home. This is where artifacts are studied.

As the most secure site the Cecilites have, it is staffed *entirely*—down to the janitors—by ordained, full members of the Order. Even the Sleepers have never (yet) penetrated La Tour Noir—and it pisses them off to no end.

CECILITE MISSIONS

INVESTIGATIONS

All cases the Order works on start as investigations. Called in due to something strange, they observe and correlate. Mostly, these cases end up being the froth of hoaxers, cranks, and lunatics. The Cecilite offers advice on dealing with the mentally ill, writes up a report, and goes away.

THE “HOT CASES”—LAYING UNQUIET SPIRITS

These are the types of missions described at length in *UA2* (pp. 253–4). Here's the short form of that information—what each type is, and what a Cecilite is supposed to do about it:

HAUNTINGS: Unnatural phenomenon manifests with no human focus. (Do what you can.)

POSSESSIONS: A demon presents in a human body. (Exorcise it.)

INCARNATIONS: A demon walks the earth in the flesh. (Kill it.)



ORDER ARTIFACTS

You'd think a centuries-old monster-fightin' organization would have a veritable warehouse full of awesome magick artifacts they've collected over the years, wouldn't you?

You'd be wrong.

The Order only has a few artifacts like that, and they fall into two groups, those that *can't* be destroyed (because of their powers) and those that *shouldn't* be destroyed (because of their provenance—i.e., they're religious relics). Both types are kept under crazy-high security at the La Tour Noir (see below). Everything else is Consigned to the Fire (see below).

CAPUT 58 M

Taken from the Templars in 1307, this artifact is a silver reliquary in the shape of a beautiful woman's head that contains a skull with "58 M" (actually the astrological sign for Virgo) inscribed on

the forehead. It's rumored to be the skull of Mary Magdalene. It has two mystical powers:

† It's indestructible.

† It glows faint green when touched by a person of the Merovingian bloodline. Given genetics over time, it glows three times out of ten when anyone who has a Western European ancestor comes close to it.

THE PHONEBOOK

While not actually an artifact, the Order's *Codex Daemonis*—known colloquially as the *Phonebook*—is also worth describing. The *Codex Daemonis* is essentially a list of the names, portfolios, powers, and recognition signs of various demons whom the Order has exorcised. Sadly, this is less handy than you'd think, because demons—it turns out—lie. (As but one example, there are 17 different entries on "Asmodeus," none of which agree in any substantial detail.)

MISSIONS OF MERCY

Sometimes, the Order tries to leverage their limited occult know-how to ease widespread or "environmental" mystical badness. Mostly, before it was lost, this consisted of sending the Knocking Box (see below) somewhere to vacuum up undead. Often, these are perfectly mundane efforts to relieve the negative aftermath of some occult incursion: counseling the tormented, recon-

secrating defiled holy sites, and doing related charity work.

CONSIGNED TO THE FIRE

After Father Rene Encanto (see above) became Superior General, the Order stopped stockpiling magickal goodies and started destroying them, often out of hand, but sometimes after study in some of the borderline cases.



The Order has files on all of the major artifacts it's said to have destroyed. Excalibur, Aristotle's *Treatise on Comedy*, Caravaggio's *Ascension of the Magdalene*, John Dee's Shew-stone, Tezcatlipoca's Smoking Mirror, Benjamin Bathurst's Shoe, Amelia Earheart's Compass, a dozen first-generation copies of the Naked Goddess tape (and some even say that they fried the original three years ago). That's just the highlight reel.

Super-powerful magickal items, thrown onto the pyre, with no regard for *the awesome things they could do*. This is one reason the Occult Underground just plain hates the Order.

(Speaking literally of "consigned to the fire," fire usually isn't enough to destroy these freaky artifacts. It took hydrofluoric acid to melt the Shew-stone, 47 pounds of TNT to shatter the Smoking Mirror, and placing the *Ascension of the Magdalene* at ground zero of a nuke test to fry it. The Order had to weigh Excalibur down with a ton of lead and drop it into the Mariana Trench.)



PART 3: THE GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT

The Order lends itself to the development of peculiar mental or spiritual skills. Some are learned and some are native talents.

THE CECILITE SKILL

The skill “Cecilite” is a Mind skill, and it’s the killer app of the Order.

Cecilite replaces the General Education skill for those who have it. Within its penumbra falls knowledge that would fall under the Theology skill for other characters, knowledge in at least one other academic field (such as Anthropology, Biology, Education, History, Sociology, etc.) defined at character creation, and the areas of specialized knowledge described in the following sections.

To be clear, a character must actually be a member of the Order of Saint Cecil to have this skill.

SPECIALIZED KNOWLEDGE

Those with the Cecilite skill have several other useful capabilities that fall under its general umbrella: Exorcism, Occult Countermeasures, Paradigm: Christian, and Pray. (Each of these can be taken as a separate specialty skill by a character without the Cecilite skill. The stats they would fall under in such cases are Soul for Exorcism and Pray, and Mind for Occult Countermeasures and Paradigm: Christian.)

EXORCISM

Exorcising a demon from its host is difficult: it’s a complex interaction of the priest’s mystic potential, force of will, and strength of faith versus the raw occult power of the demon. (See the Demons chapter of *UA2*, pp. 220–2.)

When exorcism is an option (i.e., when blood isn’t oozing out of the walls and people aren’t being lit on fire) the Order first spends a great deal of time studying the possessed to figure out the obsession of the demon. Then they lay a trap. Then they kidnap the possessed person and beat the (mystical) crap out of the demon. Here’s how that works mechanically:

STUDY: The Cecilite uses the best value among his Cecilite skill, Exorcism skill, or Soul stat when dealing with demons. (This is *always* true, *any* time a Cecilite deals with a demon.)

GRAB: The Cecilite mystically takes hold of the demon within the possessed target. Treat this as an attempt to control the demon (see *UA2*, p. 221), except it costs no charges and is resolved using Cecilite, Exorcism, or Soul (see above).

† If successful, the Cecilite has the demon in hand and can ask it a question—which it must answer truthfully—before proceeding to exorcise it. If failed, the demon jumps into the *Cecilite’s* head. Immediately roll per demon summoning (*UA2*, p. 220–1).



EXORCISE: Again, treat this as an attempt to control the demon (UA2, p. 221), except it costs no charges and is resolved against the relevant skill/stat (see above). Additionally:

- † Apply a +10% shift for using the full regalia and the **Roman Ritual** to exorcise a demon.
- † Apply a +10% shift for knowing the demon's name, either real or assumed.
- † Apply a +10% shift for knowing the demon's obsession.
- † Apply a -10% shift for each of the seven deadly sins—avarice, envy, gluttony, lust, sloth, vanity, and wrath—on the exorcist's soul. (This is why most Order members make time to go to Confession before an exorcism!)

THE THINGS DEMONS SAY

When dealing with a demon, the Order protocol is to ignore absolutely everything it says in the moment. Demons, they lie. However, Cecilites are required to provide detailed notes, in their reports, on what the demons they encounter say. These are duplicated for the *Codex Daemonis* (see “The Phonebook,” above).

OCCULT COUNTERMEASURES

Occult countermeasures are mundane techniques to limit, block, or taboo an adept who's trying to mess with you, drawing on the (vague) information the Order knows about the magickal schools and the power of confusing symbolism.

In game terms, there are three main functions of occult countermeasures:

- † Provide protection from magickal effects.
- † Stop an adept from charging.
- † Taboo an adept.

Here are the summaries, per school:

BIBLIOMANCERS: The Order knows more about bookworms than any other magick school, due to the Church's monastic tradition of the scriptorium. They know to steal or destroy the books of a bookworm, and keep him at least five yards from printed material. It's theorized that it's possible to “shield” a printed work from Bibliomancy by interleaving pages of a different printed work that's vastly different in intent (for example, by interleaving poetry into a technical reference).

CLIMANCERS: The Order has no solid data on the cobweb farmers. (They've been hit with too much mind-magick.)

DIPSOMANCERS: Sober 'em up. Keep them away from alcohol.

ENTROPOMANCERS: Restrain them. Keep them from doing anything stupid or dangerous.

EPIDERMANCERS: Don't let them touch you. Stop them from cutting themselves. Cut their hair.

MECHANOMANCERS: Prevent them from touching tools or mechanisms. Quiz them on their past. Aim for



exposed key gears, governors, and timing chains on their constructs.

NARCO-ALCHEMISTS: Stop them from taking drugs. Blow up their labs. Isolate them and wait for them to come down.

PERSONAMANCERS: You see someone with a lot of masks, burn them.

PLUTOMANCERS: Manipulate them into spending money—at least \$1,000.

PORNOMANCERS: The Order has no real data, other than that they do “lust magick.” Vows of chastity seem to help.

URBANOMANCERS: Drag them outside of their city’s limits.

VIDEOMANCERS: Grab them, and then keep them away from televisions as long as possible.

PARADIGM: CHRISTIAN

Cecilites have a version of the Christian paradigm skill (*UA2*, pp. 42–3) that protects them from the Unnatural at the cost of a permanent failed Self notch (applied when they gain the Cecilite skill). This works just like other paradigm skills do.

PRAY

Roll this skill to snap out or break free of any mental or emotional magickal influence or control.

THE PROTECTIVE FAITH SKILL

This Soul skill (see *AotM*, p. 13) protects a subject from supernatural effects. Effects that do not roll higher than the target’s Protective Faith score simply do not—or no

HEY! CANON CECILITES DON'T HAVE THIS SKILL!

It’s true, existing Cecilite NPCs like Father Jose and Father Giacomo don’t have the Cecilite skill. The reasons are obvious. Here are four options for how you can deal with it:

- † Don’t worry about it.
- † Replace their General Education with Cecilite.
- † Give them a flat Cecilite 15% Mind skill.
- † Rework the math on their Mind skills to add Cecilite at some rating that you think is appropriate.

longer—work on the target. This is a major check, and lasts for a number of minutes equal to the sum of the dice for the skill roll.

It’s unclear whether this skill can be used on behalf of another—that is, if a character *with* this skill can use it to protect a character *without* it. GMs should decide at their nefarious whim, and should feel free to vary their decision from instance to instance.

Protective Faith is *very* rare in today’s world, now seen as a valuable “wild talent.”



CHARISMATA

The Order recognizes that certain people have inherent supernatural gifts. The big question for them is whether any given instance arises from an extraordinary favor granted by God or the sin of magick. Here's their quick cladogram:

- † Does the effect happen automatically or through ardent prayer? It's divine.
- † Does the effect require some bizarre exchange or a manipulation of symbols? It's magick.

The mystical gifts of the Holy Ghost are usually called *charismata*. These are supernatural abilities of many different types that are specifically granted to their recipients for the help of others. In the early years of the Church, many of the faithful had all of these abilities. Today, not so much.

Capital-C Charismatics exchange vows of abstinence, poverty, and loyalty to the pope; manipulate symbols like crosses, holy water, and holy raiments; and display an obsessive devotion to piety. That is, *they're adepts obsessed with their faith*, practicing what amounts to a quirk school of magick. Additionally, a few people manifest individual, specific Gifts of *charismata* (see below) as “wild talents”—that is, as mystical Soul skills—rather than being full-fledged Charismatic adepts.

Historically, Cecilites have gone to great lengths to recruit both types of people, but there really haven't been that many in the Order (or the world, for that matter) during the past two millennia. Their rarity is on the order of two to four in any given generation, and

until 1903, most were of the wild talent rather than adept variety.

The Order has a strange love-hate relationship with Charismatics. They're guys who pull out mystical mojo (that's bad!) but it's all somehow supported by Church doctrine (that's good!). At the end of the day, the Order keeps an eagle eye on them, just in case, while still treating them as their Big Guns. Generally speaking, older Charismatics get more respect than younger ones.

An important thing to note is that the Order absolutely does not categorize Charismatics as adepts. To the Order, it's just the usual stuff—prayer, fasting, devotion, contemplation—taken to a high degree. Charismatics are simply high-achievers who do what everyone else, but with an obsessive fervency that produces honest-to-God results.

Since Charismatics don't have a real paradox or taboo—just the restrictions of their vows and obsessive focus—they can't really take advantage of the psychic tension of magick to do the big, big stuff. No Charismatic in recorded history has ever achieved a significant or major effect.

THE CHARISMATICS AKA HOLY ROLLERS

STATS

GENERATE A MINOR CHARGE: Spend in six hours in uninterrupted prayer and meditation.

GENERATE A SIGNIFICANT CHARGE: Unknown. Contain a demon in your head for three exchanges without becoming possessed, maybe? (Puts a new spin on the temptation of Christ...)

GENERATE A MAJOR CHARGE: Be crucified for a day?

TABOO: Charismatics don't really have a taboo, other than breaking their vows. As discussed above, this



“weak taboo” means that Charismatics don’t have the metaphysical “oomph” of other schools.

RANDOM MAGICK DOMAIN: None, really. All abilities are constrained within the scope of an established Gift.

STARTING CHARGES: Charismatics start with three minor charges.

CHARISMATIC MINOR EFFECTS

Charismatic minor effects are called “Gifts.” Each costs one minor charge. Usually, a character attempting to use a Gift prays aloud, beseeching God for aid. *This should be roleplayed.*

THE GIFT OF SPEAKING WITH WISDOM

EFFECT: The Charismatic determines the rightness or wrongness—or alternately, the “goodness” or “evilness”—of some action, item, or line of thinking. That is, the GM lets the Holy Roller know if the target is good/right, evil/wrong, or neutral/ambiguous.

THE GIFT OF SPEAKING WITH KNOWLEDGE

EFFECT: The Charismatic speaks knowledgeably on any subject, whether or not the PC has any training or education about it. That is, the GM either gives the PC greater information on the subject at hand, or lets his player define—on the fly and in play!—some *true fact* about the subject. This can even include a demon’s name or obsession.

THE GIFT OF TRUE FAITH

EFFECT: Faith imparts the Charismatic vast courage to resist obstacles and difficulties. This resistance grants protection against the supernatural, functioning as the Protective Faith skill (see above) at 100%.

THE GRACE OF HEALING

EFFECT: This is the laying on of hands to aid those in pain or bearing injury, by which the Charismatic heals a target’s injuries, equal to the sum of the dice of the healing roll. This healing works on everything, including the “unhealable” damage caused by Pornomancer blasts.

THE GIFT OF MIRACLES

EFFECT: The Charismatic performs a deed beyond human limits for the good of another (rather than himself), receiving a +50% shift on the necessary roll. It’s most usually used to enhance physical capability (to lift a car off someone, for example), cast out devils, take up serpents, drink poison without harm, and so forth.

THE GIFT OF PROPHECY

EFFECT: While Charismatic prophecy usually amounts to divinely inspired proclamations about religious subjects, this Gift can give a vision of future events. If attempting to discern the future of a *specific* person, action, or event, it costs an extra minor charge. The GM either gives the PC a hint about the target’s near future or lets the PC simply *state* what may be.

THE GIFT OF DISCERNING SPIRITS

EFFECT: The Charismatic gains temporary Aura Sight (UA2, p. 43) for a number of minutes equal to the sum of the dice.

THE GIFT OF TONGUES

EFFECT: The Charismatic can engage in basic communication in any human language, understanding and expressing basic concepts for a number of minutes equal to the sum of the dice. This ability to communicate is very rudimentary; simply put, *talk like Tarzan.*



CONTEMPORARY CHARISMATICS

There are three Charismatics alive in the modern day. The Order is aware of two of them, and both are members.

SISTER MARY RACHEL: An elderly nun from Connecticut. Interestingly, she makes Caput 58 M glow. Although there is great respect for her among Cecilites, she's "just" an associate member of the Order. She doesn't do much fieldwork these days, and mostly operates as a support member.

FATHER KEONI JOHNSTON: A very young priest from Hawaii. Although there is relatively little respect for him inside the Order (that is, they keep a very close eye on him), he's a full member. He spends his days running around the world and smiting things.

UNKNOWN: The third living Charismatic is a mystery—and *may not even be Christian!*

(Need it be said that any of these three would make interesting PCs?)

THE GIFT OF INTERPRETING SPEECHES

EFFECT: Conferred for the direction and comfort of one's neighbor, this allows the Charismatic to mystically distinguish spoken truths from falsehoods. That is, the GM reveals whether the target is lying or telling the truth.

CHARISMATIC SIGNIFICANT EFFECTS

Unknown. Duplicating the miracles of Jesus Christ (water walking, quelling storms, multiplying loaves and fishes, resurrecting the recently dead, etc.) are good bets.

CHARISMATIC MAJOR EFFECTS

Totally unknown. Create an incorruptible body for yourself, maybe?



PART 4: THE WORLD AROUND US

The Order has noticed various creatures, cabals, and high-rollers operating in the world around them. Here is what they know.

THE UNEXPLAINED

The Order knows more about vampires and zombies than anybody else—they have all the details of the respective entries in *UA2* (pp. 312–3).

UNNATURAL BEINGS

The Order has found that exorcism works against not only demons, but also against astral parasites (*UA2*, pp. 300–1) and revenants *UA2*, pp. 305–6). For other unnatural beings, their knowledge amounts to...

GOLEMS: Command them with authority.

TENEBRAE: Shine bright lights on them.

UNSPEAKABLE SERVANTS: Apply bullets, fire, and explosions.

CABALS

Here's what the Order knows (or thinks they know) about the various cabals of the world.

THE HOUSE OF RENUNCIATION

The Order doesn't understand the House of Renunciation; it has too many conflicting reports about its nature and the philosophies of its agents. Mostly, they think it's a cabal trying to hitch its wagon to Hubert Roscommons's (*UA2*, p. 229) occult star.

THE SLEEPERS

The Order considers the Sleepers to be allies of the very last resort, a desperate compromise with the forces of Hell. As mentioned earlier, the Sleepers have infiltrated the Order, and the Order has infiltrated them back. Unfortunately, the Order's mindset prevents it from taking advantage of any of the occult knowledge they've acquired this way.

A recent effort to digitize and translate extant journals of past Cecilites could allow the Order to realize that *there's no mention* of the Sleepers in Europe until the 1940s.

THE NEW INQUISITION

The Order believes that TNI is sponsored by the government of the United States, a magickal black-ops organization much like themselves.

THE SECT OF THE NAKED GODDESS

A blasphemous cult worshipping some sort of demon of lust incarnated in a pornographic actress.

MAK ATTAX

More noise than signal on the Maks' mailing lists.



THE GLOBAL LIBERATION SOCIETY

No data, not even their name.

SATAN'S CHOSEN TEMPLE

Not on the Order's radar. (Once they are, though, it'll be quick and messy.)

ADEPTS & AVATARS

In general, the Order has no understanding of the adepts of the various schools or the avatars of the various archetypes, other than what they've learned through trial and error as reflected under "Occult Countermeasures," above.

THE COMTE

The Comte—whom the Order also refers to as the "Wandering Jew" or "Rex Mundi"—has alternately

helped the Order, hindered them, and ignored them over the centuries. The Cecilites have learned not to trifle with him. After long experience, they either avoid him or accede to his requests. Otherwise, things get worse.

As far as the Order knows, the Comte appears like someone native to the region he's in, and is invulnerable and omnilingual. He can improvise magickal rituals. If he's an incarnate demon, then he's one that's too powerful for them to deal with. (Some Order theologians posit that the Comte's "something else," other than a demon—but they don't know what.)

DIRK ALLEN

A hack writer of occult trash. A few members of the Order are fans of his work. Go figure.

THE FREAK

The Order thinks the Freak is probably just a nasty bedtime story. Or, if not that, an incarnate demon.



APPENDIX: WHAT HAS COME BEFORE

The following sections are a precis of the existing, significant *Unknown Armies* canon on the Order of Saint Cecil.

UNKNOWN ARMIES, 2ND EDITION

The description of the Order of Saint Cecil (*UA2*, p. 253) is the main source of information about its history, structure, and activities. *Thin Black Line* expands on those starting details. Note that the three types of “hot” cases listed there are all classed under the heading “Laying Unquiet Spirits” here.

Also, take a look at Father Jose Carrillo (*UA2*, p. 255).

LAWYERS, GUNS, AND MONEY

The New Inquisition keeps close tabs on the Order (*LGM*, p. 31). Alex Able abhors the Order’s slash-and-burn policy regarding the supernatural, but has no qualms about pointing them at magickal threats when he has nothing to gain from them. Able’s also a generous benefactor to the Order through the Christabel Society.

POSTMODERN MAGICK

THE KNOCKING BOX

For centuries, the Order had a potent (significant) artifact—the Knocking Box—that was useful for laying unquiet spirits to rest (*PMM*, p. 144). When used, the Box sucks up demons and revenants in the area. Now containing more than 350 years worth of angry spirits, it amounts to a mystical atomic bomb. After World War II, the Box was sent to Dachau for cleansing, but was instead lost.

THE GRAIL KNIGHTS

Joseph of Arimathea (*PMM*, p. 164) aids the Order when he can. The Order recognizes that Joseph is an unreliable ally.

Simeon bar Yohai (*PMM*, p. 165) is in email contact with theological and magickal theorists of the Order.

HUSH HUSH

The Order works with the Sleepers more than any other cabal (*HH*, p. 23), although they absolutely do *not* like doing so. While the Order has the advantage in money, personnel, and political influence, the Sleepers often have the edge in occult info. Complicating the situation, Sleeper agents have compromised the lay agents of the Order... and the Order has compromised the Sleepers right back.

RIPPED-OFF HEAD RIOT

Two Order members caused mayhem while dealing with a crazy vampire/epideromancer (*HH*, p. 124).

BREAK TODAY

There are at least two lay agents of the Order on the Mak Attax open list (*BT*, p. 66). They compare and correlate occult information floated there with the Order’s records.

THE USUAL

Two members of the Order have been assigned to exorcise a franchise of the Scotsman (*BT*, p. 124).



TO GO

A member of the Order is tracking Rosicrucians in Los Angeles (*TG*, p. 15).

ASCENSION OF THE MAGDALENE

The upshot of this scenario is that the Order tries to recover a mystical painting by Caravaggio in the Prague of Holy Roman Emperor Rudolf II. See the Knights of Malta and the OSC (*AotM*, p. 11), Father Giacomo (*AotM*, p. 13), the Order House in Judith Tower (*AotM*, p. 18), and Possession by the Knights of Malta (*AotM*, p. 39).

